

## **Safety Sends #6** *Be Safe - Make It Home*

As part of the Army Safety Campaign, I try to visit at least two installations each week. This week, I would like to highlight Ft Carson and 7<sup>th</sup> ID. Their seating capacity is 1000; it took 4 briefings, but we got the message out to over 3,000 leaders! With so many soldiers that just returned from combat.... I think I learned as much as I shared. They reinforced what I hear throughout our Army...

- We got the analysis right... It is true that many of our accidents happen when inexperienced and rushed leaders cut corners and bypass standards. It is also true that we are not giving them adequate time for pre-mission planning and troop leading procedures. Step 8 "supervise" is getting a lot of lip service because of high tempo. As an Army, we need to give the **1/3 - 2/3 rule** a critical look during this next week. SSG quote, "I know the LTC and CSM are busy with the main effort. I don't want to be micromanaged...I can do my part! I must have time for troop leading procedures and could use a second set of eyes before mission execution..."
- Junior leaders assume a lot more responsibility in combat than we give them in training. If they are going to be responsible for risk management in combat... then we should hold them to standard while training. We are not **"training as we fight"**. The CSA has directed our risk management training be changed immediately to focus on an Army at War. A tall order and we must capture the full magnitude of his intent and reinforce this in the school house, during home station training and at CTCs.
- **AARs** are not capturing the day to day stresses of combat TEMPO. We must find a way to slow down the process, internalize the lessons learned and make sure higher level leaders "feel" the tempo.
- Their bottom line... they take responsibility for their actions but want senior leaders to acknowledge they need assistance with tempo and preparation time. 1/3-2/3 discipline; adjusted training and better AARs are their solutions. Communication is a powerful tool and I take their feedback as good ole fashion After Action Review.

**During the period of 13 May to 19 May 2004, our Army experienced 8 ground Class A accidents resulting in six soldier fatalities.**

Ground fatalities:

- A HMMWV driver was killed when a tank from a southbound convoy collided with the HMMWV in a northbound convoy.
- A M1025 driver was killed when the vehicle drifted into the median, skidded and overturned.
- Three soldiers were killed in separate POV accidents
- One soldier was electrocuted in a recently refurbished shower facility.

\* Bullet summaries of each accident since 6 May 2004 are attached

There were no aviation class A's this week, but I would like to share a developing trend. Good stuff for anyone who has authority over Army Aircraft... A little over three weeks ago, two aircraft were conducting a training mission under night vision goggles and in formation. The flight approached a river in a heavily forested area... the lead aircraft radioed "I'm in a fog bank and will be back out shortly." It was the last transmission the crew ever made.

This accident follows a trend from the last several months. We have lost five Army aviators in three class "A" accidents where inadvertent instrument meteorological conditions (IIMC) were a contributing factor. In FY03, IIMC incidents claimed 11 lives. **This ain't about avoiding weather or environmental conditions; it's about being prepared for them.**

As we look at IIMC, it is important to recognize that this dialog is also relevant to other environmental conditions. Brownouts and whiteouts also cause aircrews to lose

situational awareness when they lose visual reference with the ground. Clearly there are basic crew and pre-mission planning actions common to all of these circumstances. The Aviation Directorate of Evaluation and Standardization (DES) recently identified poor training in degraded environmental conditions as a problem across the Army. **Now is the time to look at this issue. With many units rotating, we are "in the seam" to make an impact. Those going will be a year without simulators and those returning have an excellent opportunity for individual training before collective plans take precedence.** There are several excellent articles in the December 2003 and February 2004 issues of Flight Fax on environmental and inadvertent instrument meteorological conditions. The articles are highlighted on our webpage: <https://safety.army.mil/>

#### **Four Vignettes on IIMC .....**

- \* An aircraft was on the second leg of an NVG training flight in mountainous terrain... the crew did not update their weather on departure. The crew deviated from planned flight route and did not initiate IIMC procedures when they flew into heavy rain showers. The aircraft impacted the ridgeline, killing all five personnel on board. **"Failure to update weather and failure to initiate IIMC procedures."**
- \* A flight of two departed the airfield with a special Visual Flight Rules (VFR) clearance using an expired weather briefing; a pilot in-flight weather report (PIREP) indicated the area was under instrument meteorological conditions (IMC). When the flight encountered the deteriorating weather conditions, Chalk 1 initiated a return to base without positive communication with Chalk 2. Chalk 2 continued on course and crashed, killing all four personnel on board. **"Failure to update weather under known IMC, failure to plan for IIMC break up of flight, and failure to initiate formation IIMC breakup procedures."**
- \* Prior to takeoff, a flight of two aircraft received a PIREP from another aircraft reporting weather conditions of zero visibility and zero cloud height. The flight lead elected to takeoff and fly the mission. The flight encountered deteriorating weather conditions; the flight lead aborted the mission and attempted to return to base under visual conditions. Chalk 2 lost situational awareness and crashed, killing both personnel on board. **"VFR departure in known IMC and failure to initiate an IIMC breakup or recovery procedure after encountering IIMC."**

- \* A flight of two aircraft were conducting an NVG cross-country training flight. It was raining in the local area, and before departure the dew point was within two degrees of the temperature (an indication of potential fog or cloud obscuration). During flight Chalk 1 reported entering fog, and Chalk 2 initiated action to avoid the fog. Chalk 1 crashed killing all three personnel on board. **“Failure to evaluate known weather conditions and failure to initiate IIMC procedure after encountering IIMC.”**

### **Tool kit highlight – Environmental and IIMC training:**

DES found that many units are not taking the time to plan and execute effective instrument training; therefore, aircrews are not comfortable when encountering IIMC. Aircrews and leaders are failing to appropriately consider the impact of adverse weather conditions or degraded environmental conditions on the mission. In garrison, our synthetic flight training systems are powerful tools to prepare crews to respond to inadvertent weather or environmental conditions. Requires a well-planned training program. If deployed and simulation systems are unavailable, enforcing good pre-mission weather planning and rehearsal can go a long way in preventing these types of accidents.

The Aircrew Coordination Training Enhancement (ACTE) program is headed your way. Please make max use of this tool. It is greatly improved and will reinforce the need for well-defined responsibilities in the cockpit. Add this to a rehearsed plan for inadvertent weather or degraded environmental conditions and you have a winning combination. I would again encourage you to visit our web site at <https://safety.army.mil/home.html> to get more information on the ACTE.

The Goal of the Safety Campaign plan is to engage our Army.... to Be Safe and bring ‘em all home.... wherever they are. We want Safety Sends to share what we know about recent accidents, the current perceptions of our soldiers and new best practices to mitigate risks. Look forward to your feedback.

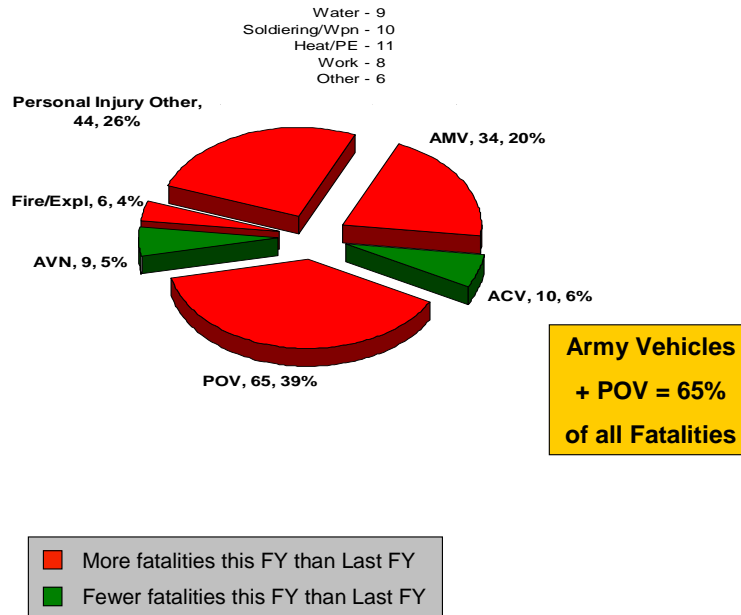
Joe Smith, BG  
Director of Army Safety

# FY04 Army Military Fatalities

**Total: 168**

Historical Data to Date*		
FY	Accidents	Fatalities
2004	187	168
2003	161	148
2002	113	114
2001	99	104
2000	115	102
1999	116	112
1998	107	93
6-yr Avg	119	112

Red = greater than the 6-yr average.



\* As of 19 May 04

## Army Class A Accidents from 6 May – 19 May 04

- Aircraft completed mission and shut down. Crew was told by tower that lightening was within 5nm. Crew exited ramp, approximately 10 minutes later, crew heard lightening strike aircraft. (Approx. 100 yards away)
- Soldier was showering alone in a shower which had recently been refurbished by local contractors. SM was found dead on the floor of the shower with visible burn marks on at least one hand and on at least one foot.
- SM was driving M1025 when his NVGs washed out, VEH drifted into the median, started to skid and overturned; driver sustained fatal injuries.
- SM (driver) involved in a one car accident; vehicle entered a curve, ran off the road and overturned. SM (pax) was ejected sustaining fatal injuries.
- SM was driving his POV when he swerved and lost control of vehicle causing it to roll over several times. SM was pronounced deceased at the scene.
- SM was operating POV, swerved to avoid a VEH passing her and lost control causing her POV to overturn. SM (Pax) was ejected and fatally injured.
- SM was driving his motorcycle on a 2-lane road passing vehicles when he collided head-on with a POV. SM sustained fatal injuries.
- UAV was conducting traffic pattern when acct entered into crosswind, turned and lost attitude and struck the ground.
- A convoy of HMMWVs heading north and a convoy of M1A2s were traveling south on the MSR. As they passed, one of the M1A2s and a HMMWV collided. The driver of the HMMWV was fatality injured. A HMMWV passenger was injured.
- SM was operating an armored HMMWV when his vehicle was struck from the side by a Bradley; SM was ejected resulting in fatal injuries.
- SM was electrocuted while swimming in a pool.
- SM was driving when her POV crossed the center line and collided with a barrier. Her POV was then hit by an oncoming truck. SM was fatally injured.
- LMTV rolled over during a convoy operation resulting in 1 fatality.